Roundup of 1992 Calendars
Books and the Recession: The Impact in New England
Copyright in the Electronic Age • PSP at Home and Abroad

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FEATURES

Battling the Recession 14
In New England, hardest hit, most publishers remain cautiously optimistic, but booksellers are girding for leaner times
By Steve Sherman

DEPARTMENTS

NEWS OF THE WEEK 8
Walden's Harry Hoffman Takes Early Retirement
General Cinema/HBJ Bid May Stall as Bondholders Seek More Money
Little, Brown to Move Boston Editors to New York City
Houghton Mifflin to Handle Sales of Dorling Kindersley
Doubleday Pares List, Sheds Young Readers Unit
Small Literary Presses Receive $3 Million 'Breakthrough' Grant
MicroSoft Press Launches Joint Venture with German Publisher
Albin Michel to Have Majority In France's Second-Largest Club
Heyne Gets Minority Partner
New Record-keeping Law Challenged
Times to Assign Cohen to Israel
AAP Sales Report for January
Supreme Court Declines to Hear Libel, Copyright Suits

TRADE NEWS 17
Chicago's Ivan Dee: A Serious New List
Flying Spur Press: Phoenix Arising from the Flames

BOOKSELLING 19
1992 Calendars: A comprehensive roundup of new calendar offerings for next year, including descriptions, terms and prices

CHILDREN'S AUDIO/VIDEO 50
Rabbit Ears Launches Line of International Folktales
Wonderworks Series Distributed & Marketed by Public Media Video

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING .. 52
Copyright in the Electronic Age

PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHING 54
PSP at Home and Abroad: AAP/PSP annual meeting explores old and new challenges for the '90s

PW INTERVIEWS 61
Tim Sandlin

FORECASTS 64
Nonfiction 64
Fiction 72
Paperbacks 76
Children's Books 80

COLUMNS

Highlights 5
Media 6
Calendar 6
Bookends 13
Paperback Bestsellers 44
Hardcover Bestsellers 45
Rights 59
Talk of the Trade 60
Weekly Exchange 83
Children's Bestsellers 88

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Albin Michel to Have Majority In France's Second-Largest Club

France's number-two book club, Grand Livre du Mois (GLM), until now controlled by publishers Robert Laffont (33%) and Albin Michel (23%), will soon have an Albin Michel majority. After merging into Groupe de la Cité, already 50% partner with Bertelsmann in the giant France Loisirs club, Laffont was unable to hold on to its share of GLM—which would have given one group a virtual monopoly of French book club business.

The divestiture takes the form of a swap: Albin Michel absorbs Laffont's third of GLM, Laffont gets Albin Michel's 50% of distributor Inter-Forum, until now a 50–50 Laffont-Albin Michel partnership. The next question will be: how to merge or reconcile Inter-Forum with Groupe de la Cité's still larger distribution facilities. —H.R.L.

Heyne Gets Minority Partner

Heyne, Germany's largest paperback publisher, until now a family company, is opening the door slightly to take in a minority partner. He is Hans-Peter Übleis, Heyne's editorial director until now; under the new dispensation he becomes president and publisher. Rolf Heyne, 63, son of the company's founder, remains chairman.

Heyne had been founded as a general trade imprint, becoming a paperback leader under Rolf Heyne after his return from a stay in the United States. The house does 700 books a year and reported sales of some $70 million in 1990 (representing a 25% increase over the previous year). There is also a small and growing hardcover list.

Austrian-born Übleis, 40, came to Heyne from Fritz Molden in Vienna. He is a familiar face at ABA conventions; because of the company's commercial profile, it is one of Europe's leading buyers of American fiction and general nonfiction. —H.R.L.

New Recordkeeping Law Challenged

A group of librarians, booksellers, publishers, artists, distributors and photographers have filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., seeking to overturn a new recordkeeping law. It makes it a felony to produce any works—including artistic images of adults—in which people are depicted engaging in sexual "conduct" unless records are kept of the names, addresses and ages of those in the photographs.

The 10 plaintiffs, including the American Booksellers Association and the American Library Association, say the law effectively criminalizes the creation and dissemination of First Amendment-protected literary, artistic and scientific works with sexual content. —H.F.

'Times' to Assign Cohen to Israel

New York Times publishing reporter Roger Cohen will become the paper's Israel correspondent based in Jerusalem beginning in August.

Cohen, who was an international correspondent before joining the *Times* in 1990, said, "The general idea when I took the job was that I would first work in New York and that eventually I would move on overseas."

Martin Arnold, *Times* media editor, told *PW* that Cohen would be replaced, but no one had been picked as yet.

AAP Sales Report for January

Category	% change, January*	% change, YTD
Adult hardcover	20.1	20.1
Adult paperback	3.9	3.9
Juvenile hardcover	38.3	38.3
Juvenile paperback	14.3	14.3
Univ. pr. hardcover	0.4	0.4
Univ. pr. paperback	22.6	22.6
Bibles, etc.	144.5	144.5
Mass market paperback	12.5	12.5
Book club	3.1	3.1
Mail order	-17.6	-17.6
Sci-tech	-3.7	-3.7
College texts	-1.3	-1.3
School texts	1.4	1.4

**Percent changes measured against same time periods, 1990.*

Supreme Court Declines to Hear Libel and Copyright Suits

The U.S. Supreme Court has declined to get involved in a pair of publishing-related cases, one involving libel, the other copyright.

The court refused, without comment, to accept the appeal of a case brought by a former Minnesota prosecutor who had sued the *Duluth News-Tribune* for libel. The Minnesota Supreme Court had ruled that the articles in question contained "only true statements or opinion, and any implication therefrom was constitutionally protected criticism of a public official."

That court's opinion added that the county prosecutor, Donald Diesen, had failed to prove the articles were written with "actual malice," a test the U.S. Supreme Court has said public officials must meet in order to win a libel suit.

The copyright case involved a music publishing company that contended it should be awarded damages for copyright infringement by a record company that had a license to use the music but failed to pay royalties due.

Lower courts awarded Peer International Corp., which brought the class action suit for the music publishing industry, $4 million for violations that occurred after the license expired, but refused to award damages for unpaid royalties. That may be a violation of contractual law, they said, but not of the federal copyright laws. —H.F.

OBITUARY NOTES

Will H. (Bill) Weete Jr., a director of marketing in the Random House trade sales department and a former bookseller, died March 1 at the Exeter Hospital in Exeter, N.H., after a long illness. He was 46.

Weete joined Random House Inc. in 1975 as a trade sales representative covering New England. In 1984 he was promoted to marketing manager for Pantheon and various client lines, including Sierra Club and Shambhala Publications. He became marketing director in 1990. He was instrumental in developing computerization in the field and, as a result, all Random House sales representatives now use laptop computers.

Before joining Random House, Weete owned and operated the Exchange Book Store in Orono, Maine, with his wife Camille, and was a buyer at the University of Maine Book Store, Orono.

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

Abbeville Press 42,43
Harry Abrams 3,39
Andrews & McMeel 26,27
Association of American Publishers 55
R.R. Bowker 63
Bulfinch Press ..... Cvr. 4
Chronicle Books 49
Collector Books 29
Eerdmans Printing Co. 75
Federacion de Gremios 7
Georgi Calendars 65,67
Golden Press ..... Cvr. 3
Golden Turtle Press 47
Grove Weidenfeld Cvr.1, Cvr.2, 1, 2
Houghton Mifflin Co. 41
Macmillan Publishing Co. 30,31
The Mysterious Press 71
NBCC (National Book Critics Circle) 58
Penguin/Dutton 67,69,71
Pomegranate 37
Random House/Sierra Club Books 20,21
Rizzoli International Publications 36
Running Press 4
Rutledge Hill 69
te Neues Publishing 34,35
Timely Art Productions 23
Universe Publishing 33
University of Hawaii Press 23
Jane Wesman Public Relations 57
Workman Publishing 22,23
The Writer, Inc. 73

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